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**HB 1448**

March 15, 2022

**TO:** Members of the House Judiciary Committee

**FROM:** Natasha Mehu, Director, Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 1448 – District Court – Concurrent Jurisdiction – Violation of Ordinances

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Moon, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration **supports** House Bill (HB) 1448.

This bill is corrective legislation to address a recent decision from the Court of Appeals which held that the issuance of fines by local governments must be adjudicated in the District Court of Maryland and only in the District Court of Maryland. The bill would allow local governments to instead establish a system for administrative agency review as to the issuance of a fine with a right to seek review in court after this administrative review.

Baltimore City, like many local jurisdictions, has for years made use of a system of administrative hearings that persons issued fines for the violation of a local law have recourse to if they disagree with the fine. The City has created such a system for violations of regulations relating to work in the public right of way, environmental regulations, housing and building code regulations, zoning regulations, late night business regulations, and many other matters. This bill generally provides an informal, easily accessible, and expeditious way to resolve disputes relating to fines and for the vast majority of these matters avoids the need to go to court even though the absolute right to do so at the end of the process still exists. This bill would simply permit the continuation of this more efficient and expeditious system to continue.

We therefore respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 1488.